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News Release

Communications New Brunswick

New Brunswick Human Rights Commission

Dec. 10 is International Human Rights Day (06/12/06)

NB 1506

Dec. 6, 2006

FREDERICTON (CNB) -The following statement was issued by Gordon Porter, chair of the Human Rights Commission:

"This Sunday, Dec. 10, is International Human Rights Day. It will mark the 58th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is probably the most important human rights document in history.

(Multimedia)

"As New Brunswickers, we can all be proud that one of the principal authors of the declaration was John Peters Humphrey, a native of Hampton.

"After pursuing studies at Mount Allison and McGill, John Humphrey became dean of law at McGill. In 1946 he was asked to set up the United Nations Division for Human Rights, of which he was director for 20 years. He also prepared a 400-page background paper for the proposed Universal Declaration, and wrote its first draft in 1947.

"Dr. Humphrey went on to make many other important contributions at the U.N., and he continued to advance human rights after leaving the U.N. He was founding president of the Canadian Section of the International Commission of Jurists, and he helped establish Amnesty International Canada and the Canadian Human Rights Foundation (now known as Equitas). He died in 1995 in Montreal, and is buried in Hampton.

"A tribute to Dr. Humphrey was held in the legislature in June as part of the national conference of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies. A bronze plaque honouring him was shown for the first time at that time. The plaque will be officially installed by Ed Doherty, minister responsible for the Human Rights Commission, in the legislative library on Dec. 7.

"At the tribute ceremony in June, the 2006 New Brunswick Human Rights Award was presented to the Hampton John Peters Humphrey Foundation. The foundation, which is based in Hampton, was created in 2000 to provide a venue to learn about Dr. Humphrey and his work, to educate people about human rights, and to inspire them to advance human rights.

"Dr. Humphrey and the Hampton foundation named after him are excellent examples of the contributions that individuals and groups can make to advance human rights. There are many others, and

we would like to express our thanks to all of them for their work.

"In the lead-up to International Human Rights Day, I would like to invite all New Brunswickers to join in the work to defend and enhance human rights, and thus further John Peters Humphrey's legacy."

06/12/06

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